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edged, was a code of extraordinary completeness and excellence, and it must have had vast influence in forming that peculiar character which enabled the Romans, after conquering the world by arms, every-where to organize it by law. Yet it was only civil and political. It regulated the outward and not the inward. It announced no principles, and rested upon no supernatural authority, but so far as appears, simply put into statute form what had been already the consuetudinary law of the Latin race.

It may then be fairly claimed that the decalogue stands alone in the literature of the world. Whether we go to the west or to the farthest east, nowhere is there found anything approaching it in correctness and completeness as a standard of human duty. All rivals fall short either in excess or in defect. They are vague, or inaccurate, or confused. They mingle the trivial with the important, or they confuse ethics with politics or economics. They overlook the state of the heart, and they omit to ground their precepts either in right reason or the will of the supreme lawgiver. In distinction from all these, the Ten Words stand out as a clean-cut manual, resolving all duty into its essential principles, stating these with the utmost precision and clearness, and basing them upon the nature and perfections of the ever-living God. As has well been said, "There is contained in this short summary the outline of all treatises on morality and all codes of justice. Not the least blemish of any vicious or barbarous legislation is mingled with it. The form is Hebrew, national; but the truth is as broad as human life, and fitted to the wants of the race. If we compare this code with the remains of other ancient peoples, with the code of Menu, the sacred books of China, the fragments of the Persian religion, there is nothing like it."

THE PENTATEUCH QUESTION,—RECENT PHASES.

BY PROF. HENRY P. SMITH, D. D.,

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While the school of Wellhausen in general seems determined to adhere to its theory of the late date (post-exilic) of the Priest Code, and consequently of the redaction of the Pentateuch, there are not wanting signs of a reaction.

The first of these is a notice by Baethgen of Finsler's attack on Wellhausen.¹ Although the reviewer finds that "the fortress cannot be carried without heavier artillery than is at Finsler's disposal," he yet pronounces the attack a severe one, and himself supports it by contributions of his own. He asserts, for example, that there are passages in the earlier literature (before the exile) which show acquaintance with A (the first Elohist). He believes, further, that the comparison of Israel with other nations does not show the order of development assumed by Wellhausen. "According to Wellhausen, the notion of sin and guilt was as good as absent from the earlier religion of Israel. . . . But in the Babylonian penitential psalms of the highest antiquity (which are not annihilated by the fact that sport is made of them) the consciousness of guilt is expressed in the most affecting manner, in part in forms which remind us of the biblical Psalms. The

¹ Finsler, *Darstellung und Kritik der Ansicht Wellhausen's von Geschichte und Religion des Alten Testaments* (Zürich, 1887). Notice by F. Baethgen in *Theol. Literaturzeitung*, 1887, No. 4.

heathen have mourned over their sins; and it is extremely difficult to believe that this consciousness is something secondary to the Israelites, whose importance to the world consists so largely in their recognition of the nature of sin and the necessity of expiation."

Again; the idea of the covenant between God and his people can hardly be of late date. This idea is found in very ancient times among non-Israelites. "The Baal-Berith of the Shechemites is not the Baal who protects treaties, as so often ungrammatically explained, but the Baal with whom one has made a covenant."

Once more; according to Wellhausen the ritual regulations were codified only after the destruction of the temple, because there would have been no occasion earlier. But the lists of offerings of Marseilles and Carthage (which show some striking similarities to Leviticus) are examples in just the other direction. The fact that in Carthage, centuries before its fall, regulations concerning offerings—regulations scrupulous in detail and allied to the Hebrew—existed in *written form* seems a very important one.

One of the fathers of the Graf school was Vatke, "a prophet of the past," as Wellhausen himself calls him. Since Vatke's death his lectures on Old Testament Introduction¹ have been published by one of his pupils. Great must be the astonishment of his supposed followers to find that he has abandoned the ground they have reached. Vatke, at the latest stage of his investigations, believed that the Elohim document (A or Q, or first Elohist), instead of being post-exilic, is as early as the time of Hezekiah (say the end of the eighth century) and earlier than the others, except the so-called second Elohist, which preceded it by a few years. These two, with the Yahvist, were already combined into one book before Deuteronomy was written, and *this* composite book (not Deuteronomy) was the "Book of the Law" found in the time of Josiah. Deuteronomy was not written until just before the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. These results are reached after a minute examination of all the documents.

Even more importance will be attached to Dillmann's re-statement of his views at the end of his now completed commentary on the Hexateuch.² The author gives the arguments against the Mosaic authorship, and a sketch of the history of criticism. He then takes up each document, analyzes it, and attempts to fix its age, beginning with Deuteronomy. This book he supposes (with the majority of critics) to have been written not long before the time of Josiah. The second Elohist (B) he places in the first half of the ninth century. "That first in the eighth century it was discovered that the name Jahve was introduced by Moses, or that the worship of the Nehushtan was unlawful, or that child-sacrifice was not allowable, or that other gods must be put away in order to the service of Jahve, or that the prophet is a man who *must* proclaim the will of God—Kuenen will hardly be able to show." The author of B was a citizen of the Northern Kingdom. The Yahvist, on the other hand, belongs to the Kingdom of Judah. He can hardly have written earlier than the middle of the eighth century.

Coming now to A, it must first be noticed that it is itself a composite writing. This has indeed been acknowledged so far as to separate the "Holiness-laws."

¹ Wilhelm Vatke's *Historisch-kritische Einleitung in das Alte Testament*. Bonn, 1886.

² *Kurzgefasstes Exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament*. Dretzehnte Lieferung. *Numeri, Deuteronomium und Josua*, von Dr. August Dillmann. Leipzig, 1886. The essay on the "Composition of the Hexateuch" occupies pp. 592-690.

Dillmann prefers to carry the analysis further, and to group the sections under the two signs A and S. S (Sinai-laws) comprises, besides Lev. xvii.—xxvi. (Holiness-laws); Lev. v. 1–6, 21–24; parts of Lev. xi.; Exod. xxxi. 13 seq.; possibly Lev. xiii. seq.; Num. v. 11–13; xv. 18–21. Besides these, however, we find a number of legal pieces difficult to place. But many enactments contained in S are already acknowledged by the Deuteronomist as Mosaic. The variations between S and D do not argue for the priority of the latter, nor does their relation to Ezekiel. The form of some of the laws, however, points to the exile as the time in which they were written down, or at least recast.

For the main document (A) we cannot assign an earlier date than that of B, and the author seems to have known C also, or some similar compilation. On the other hand, we can hardly place it later than Deuteronomy. The most plausible date is not far from the year 800. A, B and C were combined early in the exile, and D was inserted not long after. If there was any later editorial work, it consisted in inserting a few scattered pieces—some parts of S perhaps.

That so eminently fair a critic as Dillmann, after carefully working through the whole Pentateuch in the light of the most recent discussion, should hold his ground so ably is a fact of the first importance.

A BOOK-STUDY: HOSEA.

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I. LITERATURE.

Perhaps the most serviceable equipment one can have is Cheyne's *Hosea*, belonging to the Cambridge Bible Series for Schools, and Keil on the *Minor Prophets*. They are mutually corrective. Keil is of more value than Cheyne to the student who studies the Hebrew. He is not sufficiently quick to feel the life in the midst of which Hosea lived. On the other hand, Cheyne sometimes needlessly rejects the reading of the Hebrew text, and does not give contextual interpretation its true influence; for he is too apt to ignore the course of thought. When one guards himself against these defects, he will find his best help in Keil and Cheyne. Lange's and the Bible commentaries are useful. So also Ellicott's commentary for English readers. Pusey's is quite disappointing. It will be of use to read Prof. W. R. Smith's *Prophets of Israel*, Lecture IV.; Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, vol. IV., pp. 176–270; Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, article "Hosea;" and the Old Testament Introductions, as Keil's, Bleek's, and Davidson's. It is not advisable to occupy the full range of the books mentioned. The Book of Hosea should be the object of study. Let it all be done in writing or memorizing.

II.

1. Master the contents of the book according to directions in previous book-studies, writing on separate slips of paper the topic or topics of each chapter, studying these topics until, without hesitation, the details of each can be recalled, learning so as to recall with the number of each chapter the topics and the contents of that chapter.